

OLD ENGLISH
FURNITURE

ITS TRUE VALUE AND FUNCTION

by
H. AVRAY TIPPING





THE SALOON AT SALTRAM, DEVONSHIRE, DECORATED AND FURNISHED BY
ROBERT ADAM, 1768.

Frontispiece

OLD ENGLISH FURNITURE

ITS TRUE VALUE AND FUNCTION

*Being two Lectures delivered at Messrs. Waring & Gillow's
on June 11th and 14th, 1928*

By

H. AVRAY TIPPING, M.A., F.S.A.

Published by

COUNTRY LIFE, LTD.

20 TAVISTOCK STREET, LONDON, W.C. 2

for

WARING & GILLOW, LTD., 164-182 OXFORD STREET, W. 1

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

First published in 1928

FOREWORD

IN order to inform the taste and enhance the knowledge of the great number of people who now take much interest in the subject, Messrs. Waring and Gillow opened, on Monday, June 11, an exhibition consisting of nineteen rooms illustrative of various styles of English decoration and furniture, the latter being composed of original pieces or of acknowledged reproductions.

By way of punctuating and enlarging upon the information conveyed by the exhibition, they asked Mr. H. Avray Tipping to deliver lectures on the nature and characteristics of the English furniture of the past and on the value to our present needs and purposes of a serious study of it. That he did on Monday, June 11, and on Thursday, June 14, accompanying his words with an ample set of lantern slides kindly lent by *Country Life*.

There was a large attendance, and so much appreciation that a call arose to have the lectures printed. This has now been done, but as they were of an extemporary kind, delivered from a few notes and not from a full manuscript, they are not printed word for word, as spoken; but the matter, in detail as well as in substance, is precisely the same.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE SALOON AT SALTRAM, DEVONSHIRE, DECORATED AND FURNISHED

BY ROBERT ADAM, 1768 - - - - *Frontispiece*

FIG.	FACING PAGE
1. A HENRY VIII. CHEST IN OAK, c. 1535 - - - -	4
<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>	
2. AUMBRY OR CUP BOARD FOR FOOD, GOTHIC TRACERY, c. 1500 -	4
<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>	
3. A "JOYNED" CHAIR IN OAK, c. 1535 - - - -	4
<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>	
4. BUFFET OR CUP BOARD WITH TWO AUMBRYs, c. 1500 - -	4
<i>From Ockwells Manor, Berkshire.</i>	
5. DRAW-TABLE IN OAK, c. 1590 - - - - -	5
<i>From Montacute, Somerset.</i>	
6. SIDE-TABLE, c. 1600 - - - - -	5
<i>From Quenby Hall, Leicestershire.</i>	
7. FOLDING-TABLE, c. 1620 - - - - -	6
<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>	
8. SMALL OCTAGONAL TABLE, DATED 1608 - - - -	6
<i>From the Armourers' Company.</i>	
9. BUFFET OR OPEN CUP BOARD, DATED 1607 - - -	6
<i>From Arbury Hall, Warwickshire.</i>	
10. SPLAY-FRONTED BUFFET, PANELS OF MARQUETRY, c. 1610 - -	6
<i>From Mr. B. Dighton.</i>	
11. COURT CUPBOARD, DATED 1610 - - - - -	6
<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>	
12. DWARF CUPBOARD WITH DRAWERS, c. 1620 - - -	7
<i>From Speke Hall, Lancashire.</i>	

FIG.					FACING PAGE
13.	CEDARWOOD CABINET, MADE FOR ARCHBISHOP LAUD, c. 1630	-	-	-	7
	<i>From Arbury Hall, Warwickshire.</i>				
14.	ARMCHAIR OF SEMI-STATE, c. 1580	-	-	-	8
	<i>From the Earl of Mar and Kellie.</i>				
15.	JOYNED STOOL IN OAK, c. 1600	-	-	-	8
	<i>From Lady Assheton-Smith.</i>				
16.	SMALL CHAIR OF NORTH COUNTRY MAKE, c. 1655	-	-	-	8
17.	THE HALL AT KILDWICK HALL, YORKSHIRE: THE CHIMNEY END, FIRST HALF OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	-	-	-	8
18.	THE HALL AT KILDWICK HALL, YORKSHIRE, SHOWING THE COURT CUPBOARDS	-	-	-	8
19.	OAK BED ELABORATELY CARVED AND INLAID, c. 1590	-	-	-	9
	<i>From Astley Hall, Lancashire.</i>				
20.	WALNUT BED, DATED 1603	-	-	-	9
	<i>From the Victoria and Albert Museum.</i>				
21.	UPHOLSTERED X-CHAIR, c. 1605	-	-	-	10
	<i>From Knole, Kent.</i>				
22.	WALNUT SIDE-TABLE, c. 1679	-	-	-	11
	<i>From Ham House, Surrey.</i>				
23.	GILT SIDE-TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP, DESIGNED BY WILLIAM KENT, c. 1730	-	-	-	11
	<i>From Houghton Hall, Norfolk.</i>				
24.	SMALL MARQUETRY CARD-TABLE, c. 1695	-	-	-	14
	<i>From Lady Assheton-Smith.</i>				
25.	MARQUETRY WRITING-TABLE, c. 1690	-	-	-	14
	<i>Formerly in the Donaldson Collection.</i>				
26.	TALL WALNUT SCRUTOIRE, c. 1710	-	-	-	15
	<i>From Belton House, Lincolnshire.</i>				
27.	MARQUETRY WARDROBE OR CABINET, c. 1700	-	-	-	15
	<i>Formerly in the Horlick Collection.</i>				
28.	CHEST OF DRAWERS IN FLORAL MARQUETRY, c. 1690	-	-	-	16
	<i>From the Rev. Wilfred Brocklebank.</i>				

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

vii

FIG.		FACING PAGE
29.	WALNUT CABINET WITH SEAWEED MARQUETRY, c. 1695 <i>From Chatsworth, Derbyshire.</i>	16
30.	CABINET IN ORIENTAL CUT LACQUER ON GILT STAND, c. 1679 <i>From Ham House, Surrey.</i>	16
31.	WALNUT AND CANE DWARF-BACK CHAIR, c. 1665 <i>Formerly in the Horlick Collection.</i>	16
32.	WALNUT AND CANE TALL-BACK CHAIR, c. 1680 <i>Formerly in the Horlick Collection.</i>	16
33.	WALNUT SLEEPING CHAIR, c. 1679. (The upholstery is original) <i>From Ham House, Surrey.</i>	17
34.	WALNUT STOOL, UPHOLSTERED IN CUT VELVET, c. 1685 <i>From Hampton Court Palace.</i>	18
35.	WALNUT LONG STOOL OR BENCH, c. 1695 <i>From Hampton Court Palace.</i>	18
36.	WALNUT SETTEE, c. 1690. (The needlework upholstery is original) <i>Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.</i>	18
37.	WALNUT CABRIOLE LEG CHAIR, c. 1700 <i>Formerly in the Donaldson Collection.</i>	18
38.	CABRIOLE LEG CHAIR, c. 1700. (The arms are those of Skipwith impaling Dashwood) <i>Formerly at Honington Hall, Warwickshire.</i>	18
39.	GILT BED AND FURNITURE, UPHOLSTERED IN CRIMSON VELVET, c. 1685 <i>Formerly at Glemham Hall, Suffolk.</i>	19
40.	BED IN BLUE DAMASK, STYLE OF DANIEL MAROT, c. 1695 <i>Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.</i>	20
41.	KNIFE BOXES AND SPIRIT CASE <i>From Erddig Park, Denbighshire.</i>	21
42.	CELLARET, c. 1740 <i>From Mr. Percival Griffiths.</i>	21
43.	WINE WAITER, c. 1750 <i>From Mr. Percival Griffiths.</i>	21

FIG.						FACING PAGE
44.	GILT CANDLE STAND, <i>c.</i> 1700	-	-	-	-	22
	<i>From Hampton Court Palace.</i>					
45.	GLASS CHANDELIER, <i>c.</i> 1770	-	-	-	-	22
	<i>From Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire.</i>					
46.	CANDELABRA IN ORMOLU AND BLUE JOHN, <i>c.</i> 1770, PROBABLY BY					
	MATTHEW BOULTON	-	-	-	-	22
	<i>From Saltram, Devonshire.</i>					
47.	MIRRORS, FRAMED IN GLASS AND CARVED WOOD, <i>c.</i> 1700	-				22
	<i>Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.</i>					
48.	GILT MIRRORS AND SIDE-TABLES BY WILLIAM KENT, <i>c.</i> 1730					22
	<i>From Houghton Hall, Norfolk.</i>					
49.	THE DINING-ROOM AT SALTRAM, DECORATED AND FURNISHED BY					
	ROBERT ADAM, <i>c.</i> 1768	-	-	-	-	23

LECTURE DELIVERED AT MESSRS. WARING AND
GILLOW'S, LTD., MONDAY, JUNE 11, 1928

MANY of you will, no doubt, have already walked through the fine series of rooms that occupy this floor of Messrs. Waring and Gillow's premises, and which have been, as I think, very successfully arranged to bring home to you by ancient example and careful copy what was the aspect, at successive moments of our national history and national taste, of the various rooms that are especially characteristic of the English home.

What we are now met to do is to discuss the true value and function, to us in our own day, of old English furniture, and what influence it should have on our endeavours for the right equipment of our houses.

It is a subject I need not apologise for bringing to your notice, as no generation of English folk has shown so much zeal as our own in the pursuit of furniture and the desire to furnish rightly and appropriately, both as regards convenience and appearance.

I am old enough to remember a very great change in this respect. When I was a boy even large houses had a single bathroom if any at all; no means of washing except in bedrooms where niggardly little jugs of hot water were laboriously brought from distant offices; no means of heating but open fires which expired early in the night, and, when relit, were black and smoky in the icy cold rooms that one rose to on winter mornings. Rows of lamps and candlesticks took a man half a day to keep in order. Offices were rambling and ill-contrived, and the whole system gave one the idea of being the freak of an impish demon using his powers to develop the greatest possible discomfort and inconvenience with the greatest possible number of servants. So much for the disposition and fitting. In the region of decoration and furniture, the matter was simple. As regards the former, you chose your papers and the thing was practically done. As regards the latter, you went to a furniture-shop and you chose what were considered the appropriate suites for sitting-rooms and bedrooms. They were sent in to you and you were settled for life with nothing more to think about in that respect.

And what is the normal process to-day? It begins with a close study between client, architect, and specialist on heating, lighting, and domestic services, in order that the systems of electric lighting, radiators, gas-cookers,

hot water everywhere and constant, may be aptly introduced. Next, there is the exact arrangement and fitting of offices—not an inch too much or too little—to make the service facile, smooth, and labour-saving. Meanwhile, the furnishing has been receiving anxious attention. Decorators and furniture dealers have been liberally visited. But what probably has taken most thought and time has been an elaborate and long-continued hunt for what is, or pretends to be, old. Note this strange contrast between fitting and furnishing. For the former, the *dernier mot* in modernity; for the latter, uncompromising antiquity. That brings us to the crux of the matter. As regards equipment, we are certainly right in harnessing all available natural forces as much for our houses as for our motors. But have we an equally intelligent and wholesome outlook in respect of our views on furnishing? What exactly is, or should be, our furniture? It should be nothing more nor less than the concrete expression of our domestic ways and wants, conditioned in quantity and quality, in form and character, to our purse and position.

Such was the perfectly right view taken and the mode practised by our forbears, and that is what a study of their furniture should teach us. If we go back to medieval times we find that the pieces of furniture were very few, that their forms were simple, that the materials were very limited, and the craftsmanship somewhat primitive.

As wants grew, and as improved ways and means of meeting those wants developed, so do we find an expansion in the quantity and variety, in the quality and finish of furniture and household effects. But at all times, the conditions that prevailed were wholesome, and, in consequence of such wholesomeness, the output was apt—changing according to time and place, yet always apt. We may, therefore, rightly admire it and retain it. But should we bestow upon it such unthinking worship as may lead to unintelligent and incongruous furnishing, or, still worse, to unwholesome and dishonest conditions pervading the cabinet-makers' craft?

To really a very great number of people in the present day, the word antique has become a fetish. Like any other fetish, there is something mysterious and unexplained about it. The worshippers have no fair concept of what it is and what it means. They are offered something ugly, unapt, even fraudulent. They ask: "Is it antique?" They are answered: "Genuine old." They buy it, they place it; it may be wrong in itself and wrong in its association, but they swell with pride over it; they show it to their neighbours and assure them how lucky they are to have picked it up—such a thing is never bought, never procured; it is always "picked up." Thereupon their neighbours are inspired to do likewise, and, strangely enough, first one and then another and another are all equally fortunate in picking up the same things. It is almost like an Arabian Nights' story. I remember

a case in point. In the seventeenth century, I think, someone invented a crude timepiece called a water clock. I forget exactly the principle, but it was rather primitive and it was soon superseded and abandoned, and probably only one or two genuine examples survive. Well, a few summers back, everybody all over England who went for their summer holidays to out-of-the-way farmhouse lodgings seemed to return home triumphantly bearing a water clock. "Such a pick up, such a treasure, such a genuine thing." I don't know in how many cases during the following winter I was asked to join in the pæan of thanksgiving over this exceptional trove! The annals of picking-up certainly have their humorous side. But there is a dark shadow as well. Any number of our most expert craftsmen, instead of worthily and honestly striving to produce something with a touch of truthful creation, of genuine individuality, are set to work on synthetic worm-holes and deceptive dents.

You cannot blame the craftsman; his living depends upon the public taste, and the public taste demands antiques, and is satisfied if they are merely so-called. They mostly must be the latter, for there are not true antiques existing to meet one tithe of the demand. Hence you get showers of water clocks and rivers of what pass as "genuine old."

I cannot too strongly emphasise the responsibility of those whose warped and uninformed taste demoralises what should be one of our finest and most creative industries. Do not mistake me; I am not saying a word against a true taste for antiques. I am not preaching a sort of Puritanical Crusade such as, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, let loose a wave of destruction that drowned the glorious furnishings of our churches. There is not a piece of the surviving furniture of our forefathers that has not got its value, that is not to be preserved with care. It is not merely good in itself; it is an historical document, helping us to understand their domestic life.

What I beg of you to do is to become true students of the old, to give something of your time and your attention to it, and thus rightly to appreciate its spirit and its inwardness.

Let us begin this to-day by a rapid review of how English people made and used furniture in more primitive times—that is, up to 1660. On Thursday next we will bring the subject of old furniture down to the eighteenth century.

If, even now, you consider the purpose of the furniture about you, you will see that most of it can be divided into three sections—viz.: (1) Furniture to put things on; (2) furniture to put things in; and (3) furniture to sit or lie on. True, you will find to-day single pieces that serve more than one of these purposes, and also a whole host of additional objects and utensils for convenience or ornament. But when we go back to the days of Henry VIII. we

find that there is little which does not fall exactly into these three main classes, and that the types under each head were few and little varied. Wood played a pre-eminent part, and it does so still; but we employ many kinds, native and imported, whereas our ancestors confined themselves almost entirely to the oaks they grew. From the very limited surviving examples, and from various sources of information, especially inventories, we find that the furnishings of a house when the fifteenth century opened consisted of little more than the following:

To put things on you had large tables or "boards," composed of a set of planks put together, roughly or with some precision according to the means of the owner, and set upon moveable stands or trestles. The two, each 27 feet long and dating from about 1500, which are in the hall at Penshurst, are about the finest surviving examples. You also had the cup board, which meant, as the name implies, boards or planks, single or superimposed, for the display of the cups and tankards of pewter or silver on which much money and workmanship were spent.

As regards furniture to put things in, the most usual piece was the chest, still sometimes a dug-out like the canoes of savage tribes, but more often well carpentered and carved like this one (Fig. 1) dating from Henry VIII.'s time and showing the Renaissance influence that had recently come from Italy. There was also the aumbry, which was what we term a cupboard, and was formed by hinging a door to a wall recess or to a framework of carpentry. When used for provisions it was ventilated by ornamental apertures, as in the example illustrated (Fig. 2), which will date from Henry VII.'s time, as it is still in the native Gothic manner.

Under the third head, that of furniture to sit or lie on, there was rather more variety. Most frequent were benches, forms, and settles, either moveable or, as not unusual in halls, fixed to the walls. Of moveable pieces, the most common in this class were stools, for chairs, although they existed, were essentially ceremonial, and marked the superior position of the user; and thus we still have such phrases as "taking the chair" at a meeting and a learned teacher occupying the "professorial chair." Often they were surmounted with a canopy, and always were large and solid like the one at the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 3), with enclosed base and arms. The enrichment is transitional, Gothic still lingering in the linenfold panels, while the heading is of full Renaissance design of amorini and scrolls. Lastly there were the beds, sometimes portable, but more often composed of a framework on which lay the bedding, the whole being set within a draped enclosure, sometimes of great magnificence. They, indeed, were the most sumptuous pieces of the furniture of the day, as we notice, for instance, in the inventory taken at The Vyne, in Hampshire, after the death, in 1540, of



FIG. 1.—A HENRY VIII. CHEST IN OAK, c. 1535.

From the Victoria and Albert Museum.



FIG. 2.—AUMBRY OR CUP BOARD FOR FOOD, GOTHIC TRACERY, c. 1500.

From the Victoria and Albert Museum.



FIG. 5.—DRAW-TABLE IN OAK, c. 1590.

From Montacute, Somerset.

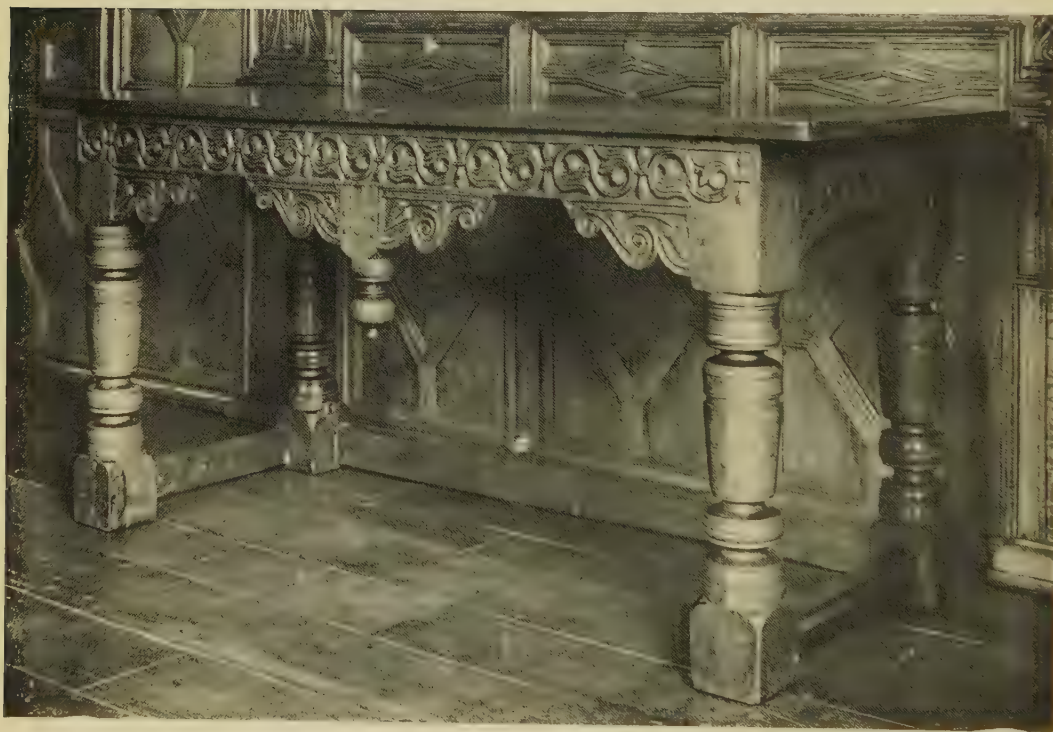


FIG. 6.—SIDE-TABLE, c. 1600.

From Quenby Hall, Leicestershire.

William Sandys, who had been Henry VIII.'s Lord Chamberlain. Costly draperies, forming canopies, curtains, and rich coverlets, were used for the beds of the owner and of his principal guests, among whom had been King Henry himself and Anne Boleyn. Not only were such rich materials as velvet and cloth of gold employed, but these were heavily fringed and often embroidered with heraldic or floral designs. Another sumptuous note is struck by the wall hangings. Most of the fifty rooms were hung with sets of tapestry, and yet in the whole of them we can count no more than nineteen chairs. Thus there was only one for the lord in the "Great Dynyng Chamber," where we find a trestle table 15 feet long and also a "cuppord of boardes" covered with a Turkey carpet, evidently for the display of plate. Already, however, this piece of furniture to put things on was beginning to be also a piece to put things in, for in another room we find one described as a "Cuppord with II. Ambres," showing that some part of it was enclosed with doors. It no doubt resembled a surviving example at Ockwells (Fig. 4). Dating from the early years of Henry VIII. it combines Gothic tradition—shown in the perforated ogee arches between the legs—with the incoming Renaissance style, which appears in the mouldings and the enrichment of the legs. Such was the gear of a Minister of the Crown early in the fifteenth century. But it developed enormously before the century closed, as we can easily trace in an inventory of Ingatestone, in Essex, made after the death, in 1572, of Sir William Petre, who had succeeded, despite all civil and religious revolutions, in being employed as Secretary of State by all the four Tudor Sovereigns.

At the date of the inventory, tables and chairs were mostly "joined"—that is, made, not by carpenters, but by the more expert joiners, a Joiners' Company receiving a Royal Charter under Elizabeth. They found clients, not merely among the great men that made Elizabeth's reign intellectually famous as well as materially prosperous, but also among the lowly, for William Harrison, that observant Berkshire parson who published his *Description of England* in 1587, tells us how, during his lifetime, English houses had "growne in maner even to passing delicacie," and that it was not merely noblemen who had silver vessels to "furnish sundrie cupbords," but that knights and gentlemen vied with them, and that even farmers had "learned to garnish their cupbords with plate, their joined beds with tapistrie and silke hangings, and their tables with carpets and fine naperie." Ingatestone was certainly a house to which Harrison's *Description* applies. Although in the hall the inventory mentions two old-fashioned tables on trestles, there was also an oak table on a joined frame fitted with ends to draw out. Such a draw-table Edward Phelips had made in Elizabeth's time for his hall at Montacute, where it yet remains (Fig. 5). Another of the same

type, but plainer and somewhat later in date, is at the Drapers' Hall, in Shrewsbury, where also there is a longer one without draw-out ends. That was by far the more usual type in England, where survivals of draw-out tables are rare, but where we still have numerous examples of the long, fixed-top, oak table, sometimes plain, but often enriched as regards its legs and rails. Ingatestone, however, being evidently furnished in the finest style by Sir William Petre, had draw-out tables, not only, as we have seen, in the hall, but also in the two rooms specially devoted to meals and called the "Dynyng Parlor" and the "Dynyng Chamber." In the former there was also what is described as a groom-porter's table, "for a carvinge bourde." Out of such tables, ranged against a wall, grew our sideboards, and they differed from the tables or boards at which people sat at meat, in that the back and sides of their joined frame were left plain, whereas the front was apt to be elaborately shaped and carved, like this example recently at Quenby Hall (Fig. 6). There are indications also that light and portable tables were in use at Ingatestone, and they became not infrequent in the early part of the seventeenth century. There is a choice example belonging to the Armourers' and Braziers' Company, of octagonal shape, well finished with fluted legs (Fig. 8). As such tables were intended to be moved, and it was desirable that they should take up as little room as possible when not in use, they were often made to fold, and, therefore, although of very different material and make from the eighteenth-century card-tables, like them were round when open, but half-circular when closed and set against a wall. Such tables under James I. followed the usual form of decoration, the rail being often carved with strap-work and other geometrical patterns (Fig. 7). Specialised forms for particular uses were exceedingly rare, and so the same table would serve for the drinks of men, the needlework of women, and the card-play of both sexes. At Ingatestone there were various "cup bourdes," a word which by then might either be, as of old, a set of shelves, or might be partly or wholly enclosed with doors or aumbrys. The open type under Elizabeth and James generally took the form of three tiers, and of this type there is a good example at Arbury, in Warwickshire, with the date 1607 carved on it, and also a shield bearing the initials J. and N., implying that it was made at the time for the ancestor of the present owner, Sir Francis Newdegate (Fig. 9). The type resembles small superimposed tables, having bulbous legs, like the Montacute table, with the rails much enriched. We call them open buffets, but, although that French word occurs in England before the sixteenth century closed, it is a little uncertain to exactly what piece of furniture it applied. When the open buffet was enclosed it took the form of what we call a court cupboard. Of these, a good many have survived and several of them are included in the present exhibition. They were important pieces of



FIG. 7.—FOLDING-TABLE, c. 1620.

From the Victoria and Albert Museum.



FIG. 8.—SMALL OCTAGONAL TABLE, DATED 1608.

From the Armourers' Company.



FIG. 9.—BUFFET OR OPEN CUP BOARD, DATED 1607.

From Arbury Hall, Warwickshire.

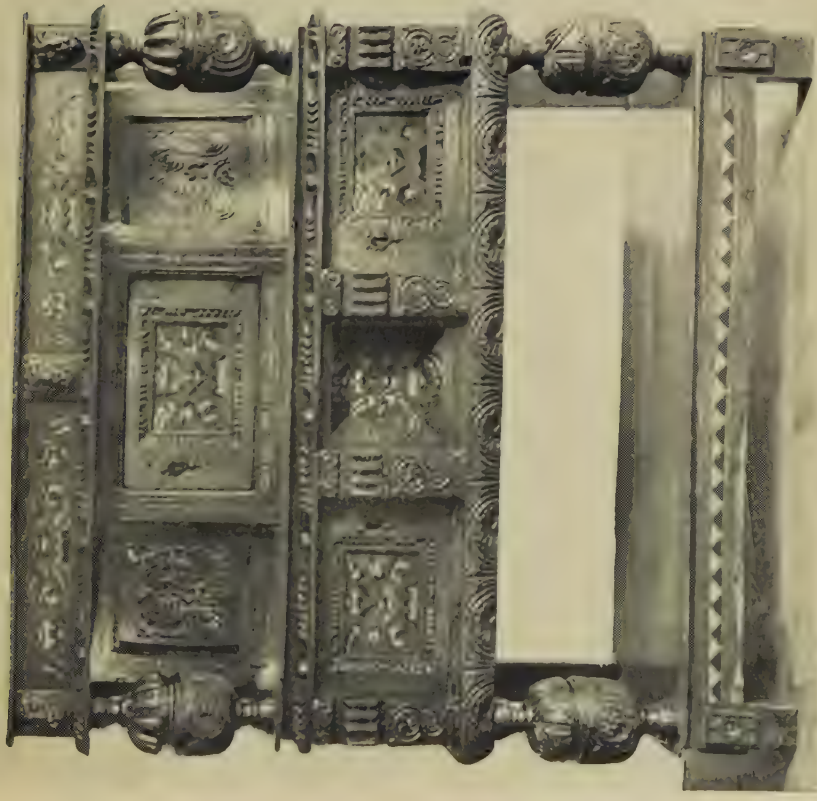


FIG. 10.—SPLAY-FRONTED BUFFET, PANELS OF MARQUETRY, c. 1610.
From Mr. B. Dighton.

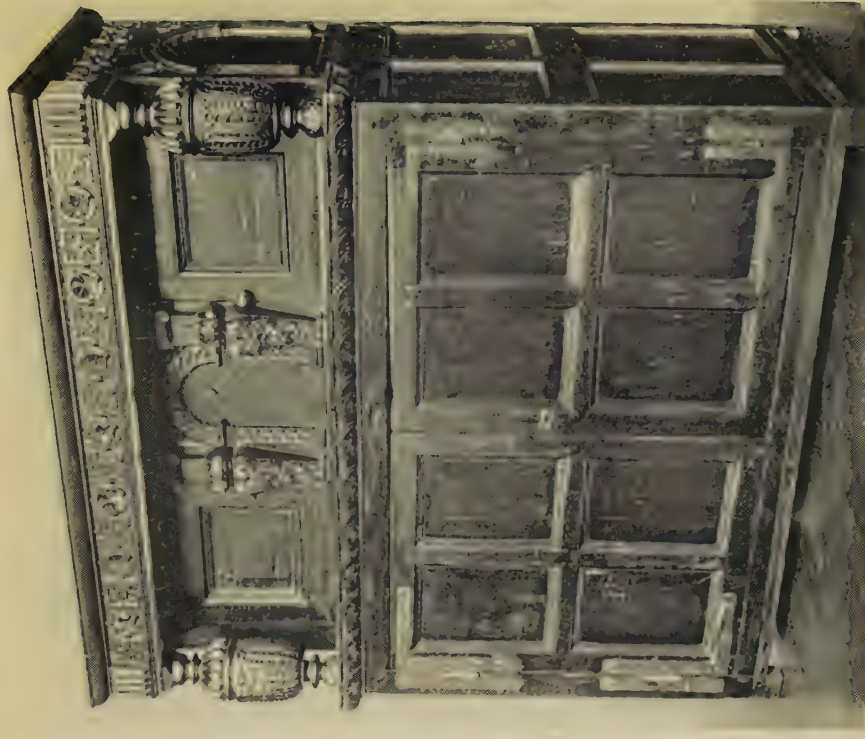


FIG. 11. COURT CUPBOARD, DATED 1610.
From the Victoria and Albert Museum.



FIG. 12.—DWARF CUPBOARD WITH DRAWERS, c. 1620.

From Speke Hall, Lancashire.

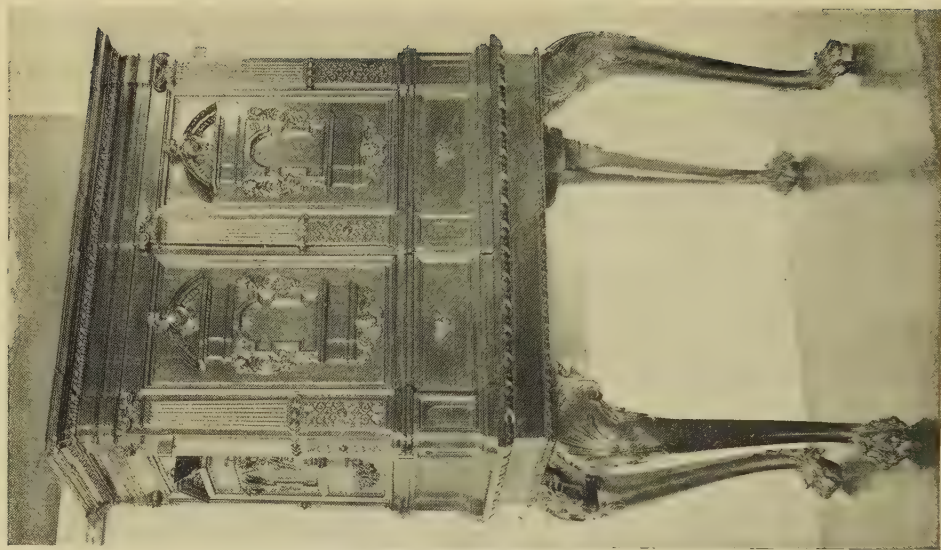


FIG. 13.—CEDARWOOD CABINET, MADE FOR
ARCHBISHOP LAUD, c. 1630.

From Arbury Hall, Warwickshire.

furniture, on which elaborate carving and some inlay were often bestowed (Fig. 10). The lower part was enclosed by a pair of large doors, while the upper part had a recessed enclosure, fitted with two doors, but giving room for the retention of the same sort of bulbous supports as the open buffet (Fig. 11). In respect of the open buffet, the top rail was occasionally, in late examples, fitted with a drawer, a development that now began to take hold. It will have been a foreign introduction, and perhaps first known in England from cabinets of Italian and Spanish origin. It was, however, still rare under James I. when we do occasionally find drawer-fitted cupboards, either of the two-tiered court type, or, like an example from Speke (Fig. 12), with one pair of doors only which open to a set of drawers. Sumptuous Italian cabinets were obtained from Italy by King James and some of his principal courtiers, but one of the earliest that England can claim as home produce will be that made for Archbishop Laud, somewhere between the years 1628 and 1633 when he was Bishop of London, the arms of the See impaling those of Laud being on the cabinet (Fig. 13). Its decorative scheme corresponds with chimney-pieces at St. John's College, Oxford, of which Laud had been President, and where he erected the buildings in which such woodwork is found. The stand on which the cabinet rests is some hundred years later in date.

Such were the developments, under Elizabeth and her immediate successors, in furniture to put things on and to put things in. As regards furniture on which to sit or to lie, we find stools still very largely in use, each of the Ingatestone eating rooms having "12 highe joyned stooles." They will have resembled one with fluted legs lately in the Donaldson Collection (Fig. 15). Chairs, however, were becoming more numerous. There were two high and two low ones in the Ingatestone dining parlour and others, described as both high and low, were in other rooms.

But the chair of semi-state was still prevalent. One of box form at the Victoria and Albert Museum is dated 1572, and belonged to John Smallwood, the great clothier, of Newbury. Others, although with no enclosed base, acquired dignity from a high cresting to the back, as in the example illustrated (Fig. 14). In place of carving the principal panel was apt to be enriched with the early form of marquetry that was usual in the finest furniture of late Elizabethan times. Such chairs, however, were more often carved, indeed, overcarved, in a somewhat coarse manner. Very few English carvers at this time were trained to real sculpture, and their work was more often geometrical, or strapwork in low relief. Small chairs, although they now make their appearance and occur in the Ingatestone inventory, are not yet in sets, and are somewhat rare. Figure 16 shows one of a design that looks as if it belonged to James I.'s reign, but coming, as the type does, from

such northern and backward counties as Derbyshire and Yorkshire, are really of post-Restoration date. What a small Yorkshire manor house was like at this time is well seen at Kildwick, where the hall retains all its original features of mullioned windows, stone arched fireplace, beam and rafter ceiling, and oak wainscoting (Fig. 17); whilst the furniture, although not original to the house, is a careful collection of typical Yorkshire pieces. The long, joined table has its accompaniment of exactly such chairs as we have seen. At the other end of the room (Fig. 18) is an unusually large court cupboard 9 feet long and surmounted by an open tier where pewter is displayed. This piece is especially interesting as having come from the original manor house that Emily Brontë took as the scene of her *Wuthering Heights*.

Whereas, in Henry VIII.'s time, beds were chiefly remarkable for their upholstery and have disappeared, under Elizabeth a type with oak posts, back and tester came into fashion, and of these a considerable number survive. One of the most elaborate is at Astley Hall, in Lancashire (Fig. 19). In every part it is enriched with both carving and marquetry. A quieter but perfect and interesting example (Fig. 20) has the date 1603 accompanied by inlaid flower sprigs and a crow, probably marking it as having belonged to the Corbets, of Moreton Corbet, in Shropshire. It has the distinction of being not of oak, but of walnut. Furniture in that material was rare and greatly prized in Elizabeth's time. In Italy and France furniture had long been made of it, and, no doubt, some of the pieces that we find in English inventories of Elizabeth's and James's time will have come from the Continent. Other pieces, however, like the Corbet bed, are so distinctly English in character that they will have been native made, although the material itself was probably imported. Ingatestone was rich in furniture of "walnut-tree," as it was then always termed. Both tables in the eating rooms were made of it, and so was one of the sets of twelve stools. Moreover, in one of the chambers we find "A Standynge Bedstede of Walnut-tree with turned and fluted posts," which answers quite well as a description of the Corbet bed. The marquetry of the time which we have noted was not, as we shall find later, part of a complete covering of veneer, but was composed of woods lighter and darker in tone than the oak or walnut that formed the solid woodwork into which the pattern was cut and the inlay glued in. It was most especially used with the walnut furniture of the time, and the largest quantity will certainly have been in the vast collection of sumptuous furniture which descended to Lord Lumley from his father-in-law, the Earl of Arundel, and was mostly at the Palace of Nonsuch, which he acquired in 1556 and left to Lord Lumley when he died in 1580. Arundel had travelled in Italy, and had acquired furniture from there and also objects in marble,

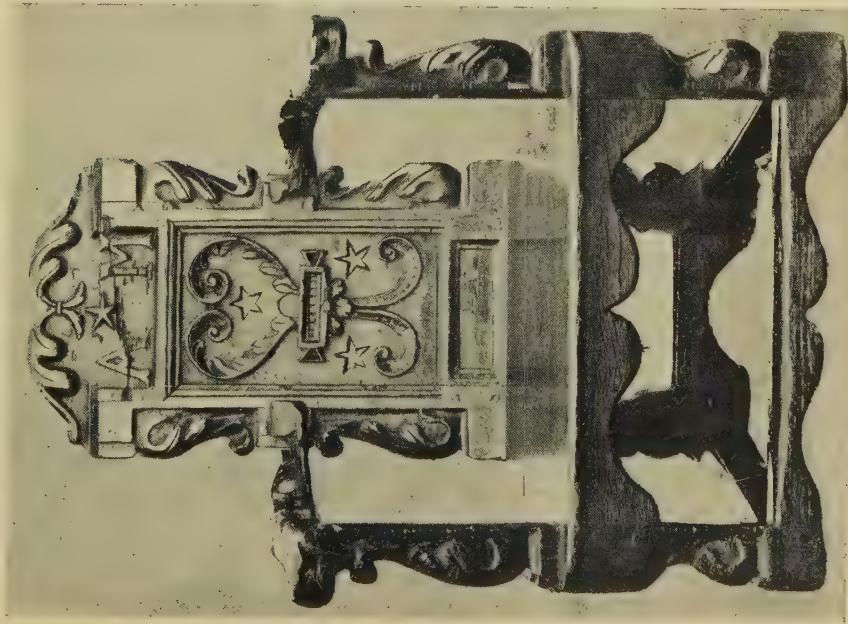


FIG. 14.—ARMCHAIR OF SEMI-STATE, c. 1580.
From the Earl of Mar and Kellie.

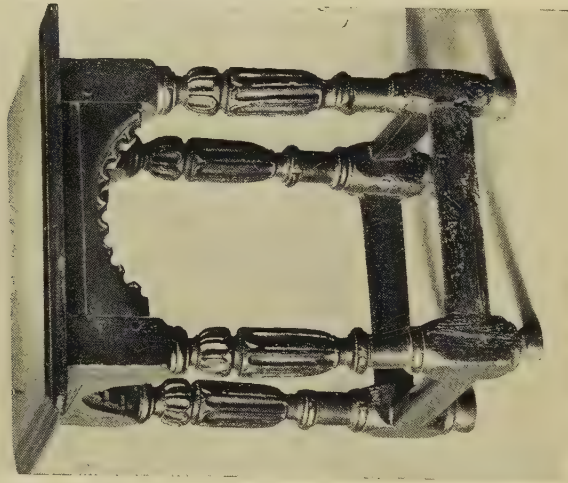


FIG. 15.—JOYNED STOOL IN OAK, c. 1600.
From Lady Assheton-Smith.

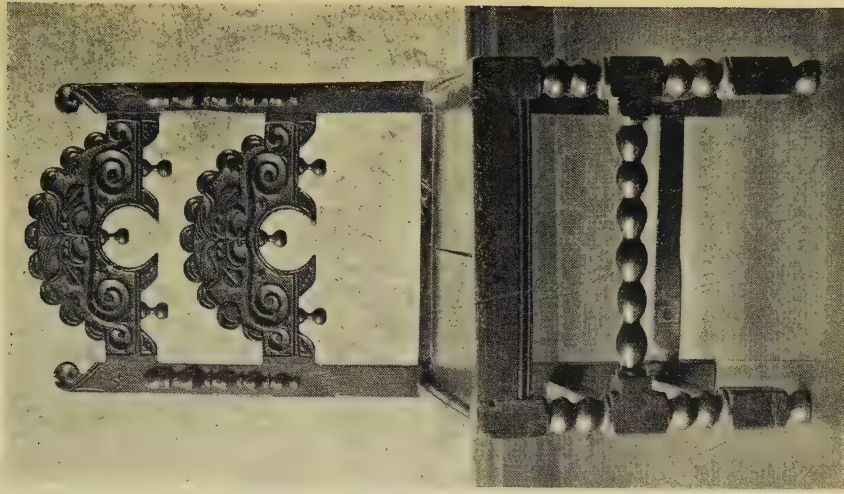


FIG. 16.—SMALL CHAIR OF NORTH
COUNTRY MAKE, c. 1655.



FIG. 17.—THE HALL AT KILDWICK HALL, YORKSHIRE: THE CHIMNEY END, FIRST HALF OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

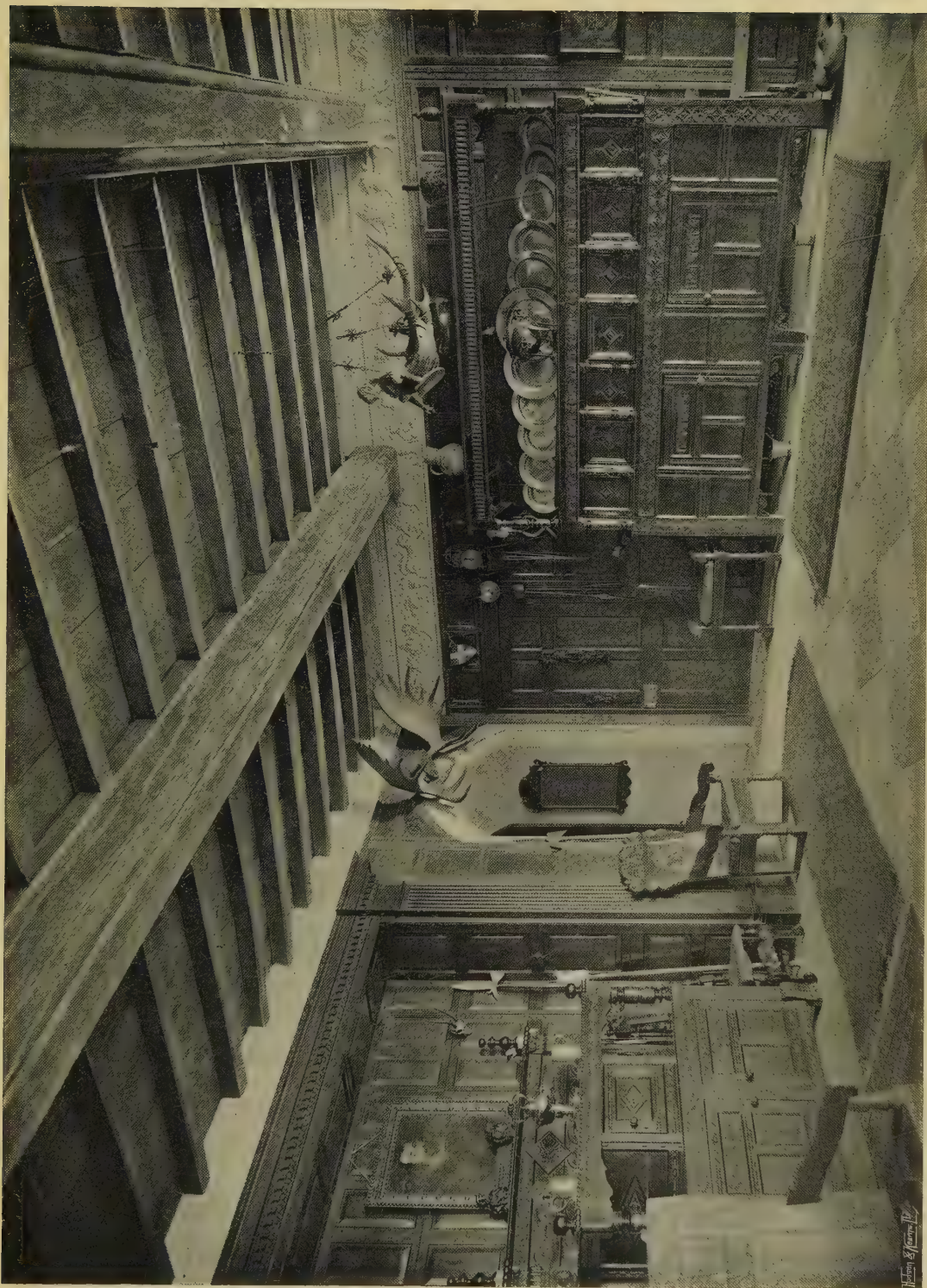


FIG. 18.—THE HALL AT KILDWICK HALL, YORKSHIRE, SHOWING THE COURT CUPBOARDS.

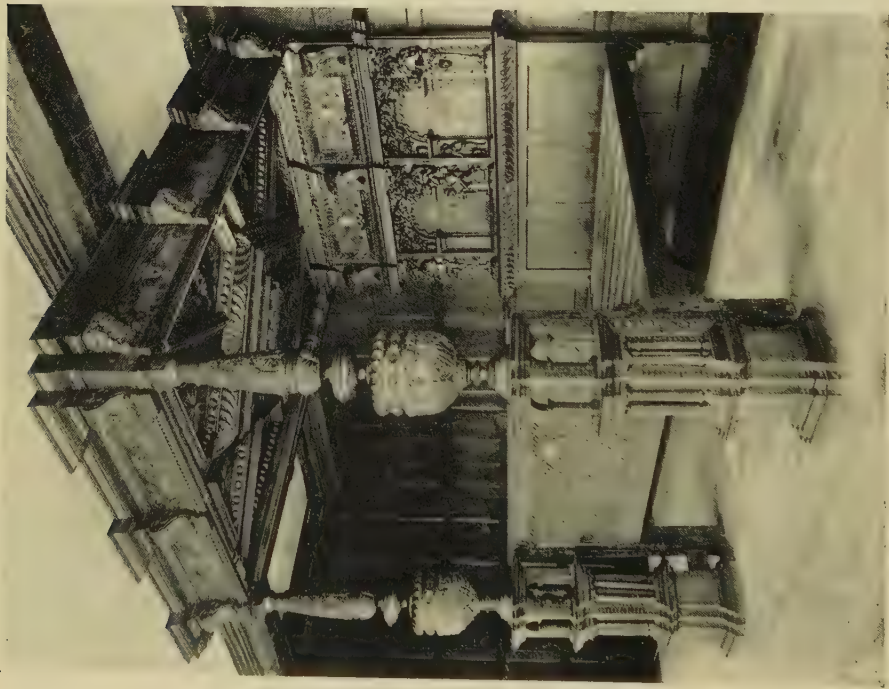


FIG. 19.—OAK BED ELABORATELY CARVED AND
INLAID, c. 1590.

From Astley Hall, Lancashire.

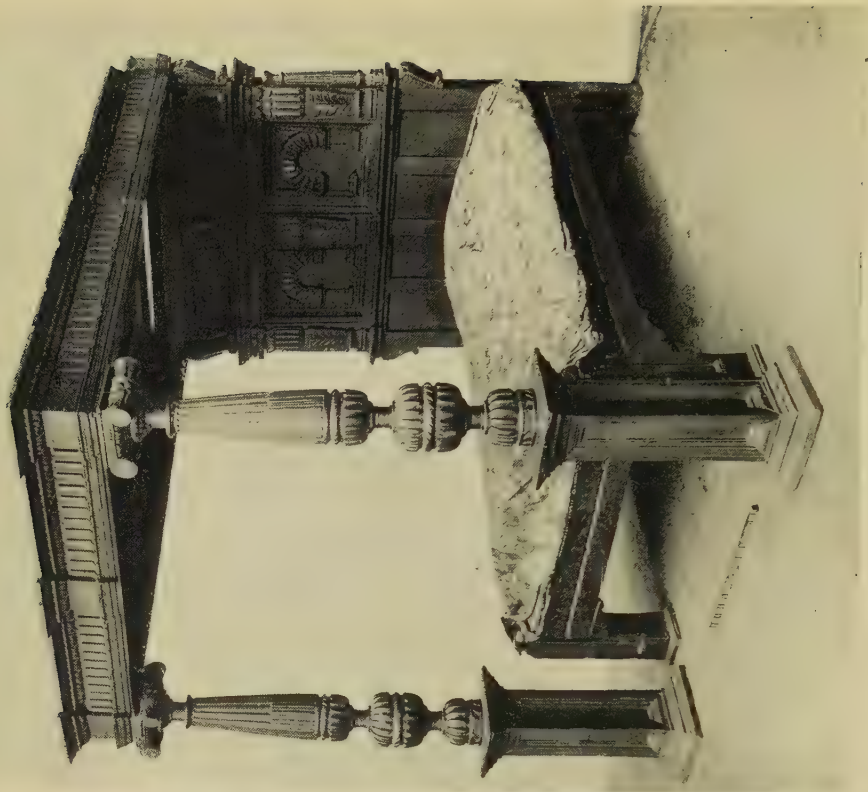


FIG. 20.—WALNUT BED, DATED 1603.

From the Victoria and Albert Museum.

such as fountains and table-tops. Although he will have possessed both Italian and French pieces of walnut furniture, yet much of the great quantity that he acquired will, as at Ingatestone, have been English, and practically all was inlaid.

Thus, in a summary of the inventories of Lord Lumley's goods, made in 1590, we find listed as "Of Walnuttre and Markatre"

Chairs	...	...	17	Tables	...	...	25
Stools	...	...	57	Cupboards	...	...	8
Formes	...	...	20	Beds	...	...	23

In each class there was about twice as many of oak as of walnut. Tapestry was abundant, there being fifty-seven entire sets. The beds, some of which were gilt, were splendidly upholstered, and we also hear of numberless upholstered stools and chairs, which was a rare luxury at that date. Velvets, silks, and cloth of gold are among the fabrics used. Such were only to be found in the most sumptuous of noblemen's houses, and very few examples survive except those obtained for Knole, in Kent, by the first and third Earls of Dorset, of which the X chair, shown in Figure 21, is the fellow to the one—or *the* one—in which James I. is seen sitting in a picture that is hung above it—a portrait presented by him to his High Treasurer, the first Earl of Dorset.

It is not, however, the luxury of the court, but the simplicity of the manor house that especially strikes us during the Tudor and Early Stuart age. In the equipment of their houses, men, as we have seen, were satisfied with little furniture, and that limited in the number of its forms, roughly constructed and somewhat clumsily enriched. But it was in harmony with their domestic needs, and was a reflection of their good, but not highly developed taste.

Our own needs and habits being far more intricate, and our taste being broadened by contact with the decorative output of later generations in all the most civilised countries in the world, it is not on this early native period that we must too greatly rely for inspiration. Yet it offers us many lessons and in many respects is more sympathetic than the products of the ceremonious age of George III. as designed by Robert Adam for the ultra-elegant society of his day. Our manners are now apt to be a little brusque and our attitudes somewhat sloppy, so that many feel much at home in a room like the Kildwick hall that we have just seen, but which, please remember, differs from what it was in the seventeenth century in that there is set in it far more furniture than there will have been then and that what there was would, anyhow for the most part, have been plainer and less choice.

But the spirit in which men then lived and furnished well deserves attention to-day. All the old gear that survives is not merely to be carefully preserved as valuable in itself, but also as teaching us much of the domestic life of our ancestors and affording us models from which we should be able to draw valuable data for new work.



FIG. 21.—UPHOLSTERED X-CHAIR, c. 1605.

From Knole, Kent.



FIG. 22.—WALNUT SIDE-TABLE, c. 1679.

From Ham House, Surrey.



FIG. 23.—GILT SIDE-TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP, DESIGNED BY WILLIAM KENT, c. 1730.

From Houghton Hall, Norfolk.

LECTURE DELIVERED AT MESSRS. WARING AND
GILLOW'S, THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 1928

THOSE of you who were good enough to listen to my lecture will remember that what we then considered was what, exactly, was the value and what the function of old furniture in respect of our present needs—what does it teach us, and how shall we use it? We considered that, and, with the help of a series of slides thrown on the screen giving examples of early English furniture dating up to the time of the Commonwealth, we saw how simply our ancestors had lived, how very little furniture they had, and how it was nearly all of one material and took a very limited number of forms. Now we will go forward. We will take the period of the Restoration and notice the differences and development that then arose, and we will trace them during the hundred years that followed. In tracing evolutionary movements it is generally difficult to get points at which to begin and end periods of change, because developments are apt to be continuous with no abrupt and marked transitions. But, fortunately for anyone who is dealing with English furniture—and this applies also to architecture and decoration—there is a very definite break, for when Charles I. became unpopular, when politics began to be more considered than furniture, there was a lull in the movement towards increased variety and refinement. After that there came still worse times—Civil War followed by a Commonwealth imbued with Puritan ideas of simplicity and of superiority to the things of the flesh. Thus, from about the year 1630 until the Restoration of 1660, very little forward movement takes place. But when the Restoration did come it brought about, with considerable suddenness, very marked alterations. Whereas there had been this pause in England, the same thing had not taken place abroad, and thus you get a strong influx of foreign influences. The new movement that then comes in is all the more powerfully flavoured with Continental ideas because the King and his courtiers, the monied and landed people who came back into their properties, had been long in exile and had grown into Continental ways and fashions. Thus we notice a very considerable change in all that concerns furnishing straightaway from the day in 1660 when Charles II. landed in England.

A point that impressed us last time was how tremendously weighty Elizabethan furniture was. It was not only made of heavy wood, but the pieces were heavy from the amount of material that was put into them, this

applying almost more to chairs than to other articles. With the Restoration came a great change from heaviness to lightness. They not only used lighter wood, but they used less of it, and the furniture was constructed generally in a lighter manner. That is one great change.

Secondly, you begin to see a great improvement in the craftsmanship of our joiners and of the new class of craftsmen called cabinet-makers. Whereas they were very good in 1660, by the time that the Stuarts were finally followed by the Hanoverians on the death of Queen Anne, in 1715, there were no more able men both in capacity for adequate design and in perfection of craftsmanship than the leading cabinet-makers of England. France, indeed, excelled in what we may call the palatial manner, because their ablest artists had a free hand and unlimited time for the production of the finest gear called for by an all-powerful sovereign and a limited number of extremely wealthy nobles.

But for really beautiful domestic furniture, aptly designed and admirably executed for practical use, you will find nowhere anything better, if so good, as the English furniture that begins with the Restoration and goes on for the rest of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Thirdly, with the Restoration, there is an increase in luxuriousness which shows itself in several ways. In the first place, the furniture, both in material and in treatment, becomes more costly and elaborate. Secondly, the quantity of furniture increases very largely, although there was nothing like the amount of furniture in rooms of the seventeenth or eighteenth century that there is now. One of the troubles in preparing the rooms here for exhibition was not to put too much furniture in, and, as a matter of fact, you will find there still is more than there would have been under the Stuarts and Hanoverians. At the same time, there was not the extreme sparseness that characterised the medieval and the Tudor times. That naturally arose from the fact that after 1660 it takes on many more forms. Furniture for general purposes appears in more than one form, and there is also a differentiation in the design of pieces, suiting them to particular uses. We begin to note, for instance, special forms of tables, calculated and devised for the various ends for which the table may serve.

Let us begin our series of slides to-day, as we did in the previous lecture, with tables. There is the gate-legged type, which you know well—"a top with flaps supported on pivoted legs, each pair being united at the top and bottom by stretchers and constituting a gate," as the *Dictionary of Furniture* defines it. They are seldom large, and, although mostly of oak, are lightly made—the bulbous legs, massive stretchers, and thick top of the previous age are gone. Thus, John Evelyn, when he had become old in 1690, tells us, as a recollection of his boyhood, that is in the late years of Charles I.'s

reign, that hall tables were "fixed as the freehold"—meaning that they were so cumbersome that, if the place was sold, the table was sold with it. Thus, it interested me a few years ago, when looking over an empty house near Shrewsbury which had just changed hands, to find that in the kitchen there survived, in somewhat dilapidated condition, a table that had remained "fixed as the freehold" through half a dozen changes of ownership. It was the massive bulbous-legged and draw-out table which Richard Prince, who completed the house in 1582, had provided for his hall, and it resembled that which, as we saw on Monday, Edward Phelips had had made for Montacute about the same date. But the gate-legged table, with its little spindle legs, is sufficiently light to be fairly portable, and its flap system made it easily removable. The normal size did not allow of very many people dining at it, but then, a new habit had arisen in England, as we learn from the secretary of Duke Cosmo III. of Tuscany, who was in England and was much entertained in 1669. The secretary specially notices that "it is the fashion now to dine in small parties at different tables." In the "Great Dining Room" at Ham House, in Surrey, completed in 1679 by the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale, the surviving inventory mentions as many as eight cedar-wood tables, no doubt of the gate-legged type. Expanding tables, or those lengthened by additional sections, do not come into vogue until George II.'s reign and were not habitual until well on in George III.'s time, when Sheraton was a leading designer, and it is tables of his style which you will find in the two dining-rooms now on exhibition. In the Ham House inventory, and in the same room, mention is made of two side-tables in walnut wood, which, I believe, are those still existing, and one of which we will now look at (Fig. 22). It is, as the inventory states, made of walnut, and is of exceptional workmanship. The masterly sculpture of the figures that form the chief features of the scrolled legs make it probable that it owes its origin to one of the foreign craftsmen in England. It is over 5 feet in length, and thus the character of the Lauderdale dining-room was given by light, movable tables in the centre and more elaborate and heavier tables at the side. That character prevailed, especially as regards the side-tables, which became larger and more sumptuous. They were of various materials, but, after the eighteenth century is reached, most usually of mahogany or of white wood gilt. Here is a small example of carved and gilt wood, the top decorated in gesso, the legs pillar-shaped with gadrooned capitals connected by scrolled stretchers with a ball-shaped finial in the centre. It dates from about 1695, was made for a Lord Coningsby, and was in his place in Herefordshire, where, strangely enough—as the estate had changed hands a century ago—I found quantities of the Coningsby furniture of very high quality. Such gilt side-tables went on being made larger and larger, and

may be said to culminate in one designed by William Kent for the Saloon at Houghton, a house built about 1730 by the well-known Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole (Fig. 23). Its marble top is over 2 inches thick. The gilt stand has scrolled legs, on which sit female sphinxes, connected to the up-rights for constructional as well as artistic reasons by acanthus leafage. In the central pendant is Sir Robert's crest within the Garter of that Order. Kent's work was of a very individual kind. He was a designer with a considerable amount of originality. His period was that of the prevalence of the Italian baroque style, which he handled for all it was worth, and yet with more reserve than did the Italians of his time.

From such heavy side-tables we will pass to something which is quite light. Here is a somewhat early example of a table especially designed for card-play. It is quite small when closed, but when you open it the top becomes an ample space covered with fine velvet (Fig. 24). It is a very interesting example, and I do not suppose there are more than half a dozen of them in England. You will notice its beautiful marquetry of the reserved arabesque type. The marquetry of this period is different from that which I showed you last week, for it is not let into the solid, but forms part of a complete covering of veneer. The date of this table is about 1695, but it was not till the eighteenth century opened that card-tables became really popular and assumed such variety of forms that the *Dictionary of Furniture* could not illustrate the subject in its various aspects with less than forty-two examples. The form—oblong or semi-circular when closed, to stand against a wall, but opening out when for use—will be familiar to you all. Another item that increased enormously was the furniture for writing purposes. In olden times a desk with sloping front that lifted to admit of getting to its contents was set on the top of one of the big trestle or joined tables. But after the Restoration you get quite a number and a variety of pieces of furniture especially designed for writing purposes; so much so that the *Dictionary of Furniture* illustrates forty-five writing or library tables and sixty bureaux or scrutoires. We have now reached the point when our division of furniture into three heads—furniture to put things on, furniture to put things in, and furniture to sit or lie upon, which answered perfectly in early times—becomes inapplicable. That is chiefly caused by the invasion of the drawer, which, we saw, probably came to England through the rare cabinets that were imported from Italy. Not only did cabinets, and, therefore, drawers, become numerous after the Restoration, but also the latter were introduced into other pieces of furniture, and especially into tables for writing and other purposes, so that tables are apt to be quite as much pieces to put things in as to put things on. Perhaps as large a proportion of tables as three in four belonging to the period under review had at least one drawer.

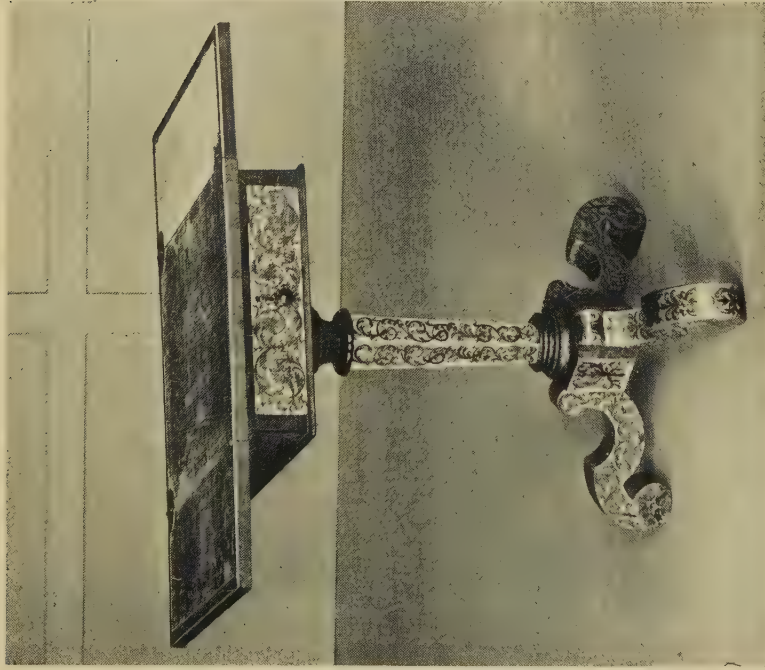


FIG. 24.—SMALL MARQUETRY CARD-TABLE, c. 1695.

From Lady Asheton-Smith.

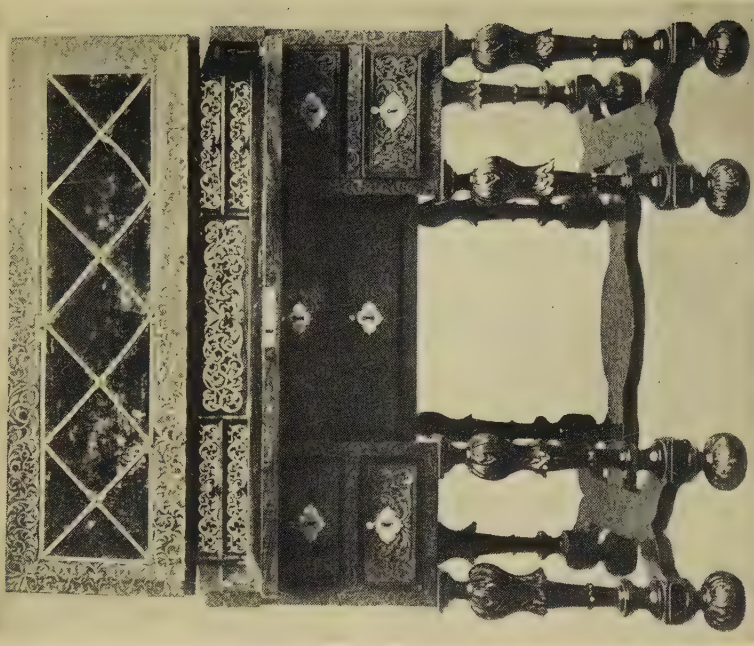


FIG. 25.—MARQUETRY WRITING-TABLE, c. 1690.

Formerly in the Donaldson Collection.

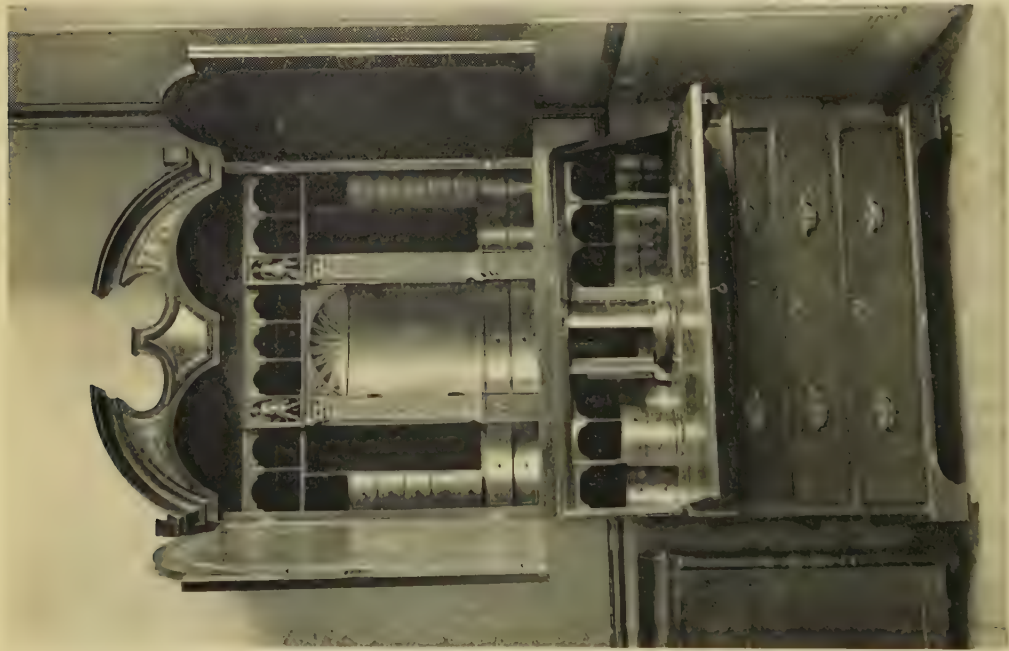


FIG. 26.—TALL WALNUT SCRUTOIRE, c. 1710.

From Belton House, Lincolnshire.

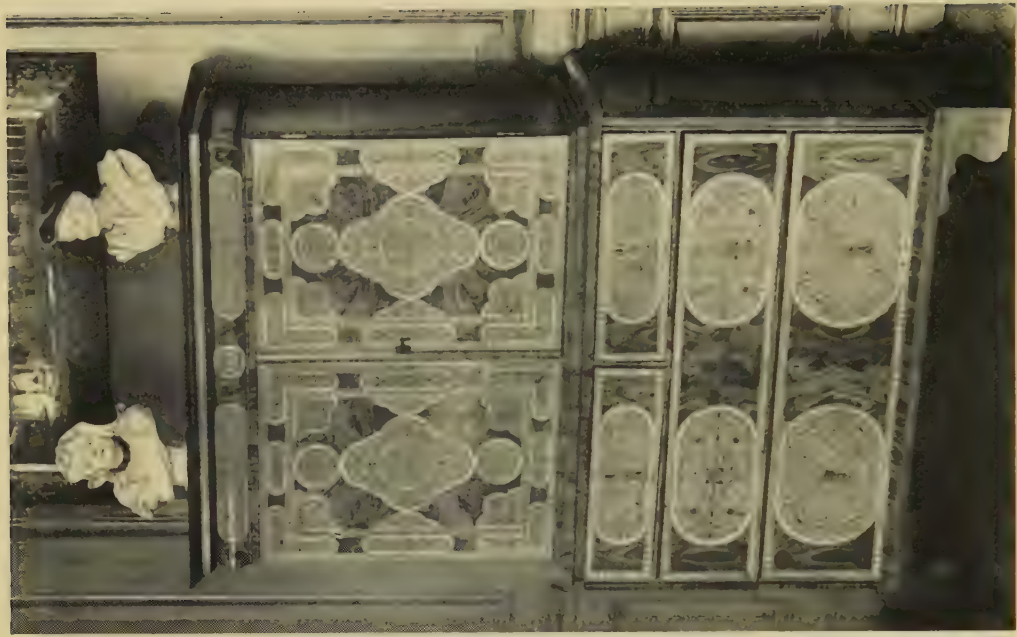


FIG. 27.—MARQUETRY WARDROBE OR CABINET, c. 1700.

Formerly in the Horlick Collection.

Here, for instance (Fig. 25), is a walnut bureau writing-table, inlaid, like the little card-table we have just seen, with arabesque marquetry and dating from about 1690. It has somewhat the same form of leg and stretcher as the Coningsby side-table, a type that came in at the end of Charles II.'s reign and continued to the end of that of William III. Out of use it is just a table, but the top lifts and folds over, and the front lets down, offering writing space and five drawers in addition to the six in the lower part. As the amount of writing, and the various products of writing increased—such, for instance, as household accounts and estate papers—more and more drawer room was needed. Hence the tall bureau or scrutoire, of which Figure 26 is a notable example. It is composed of three parts; at the base, a chest of drawers, above that a large edition of the old form of desk with a sloping flap to open out and rest on runners, of which the one to the right shows in the illustration. The flap, when let down, displays drawers, niches and little cupboards. Set on to this second section is a shallow cupboard, the doors of which open on to a set of pigeon holes, drawers and sections high enough to accommodate ledgers. It is a sumptuous piece in veneered and banded walnut, with gilt figures in Roman costume in two niches, and was, no doubt, made in about 1710 for Belton House, in Lincolnshire, where it still is.

With regard to furniture solely intended to put things in, the chest of the coffer kind goes out of fashion, although English examples, generally of plain, panelled type and in mahogany, were still made to hold linen and such household effects. But there were also importations from the East, and very fine chests of Oriental lacquer on English stands are to be found in such great houses as Belton, Chatsworth, and Kimbolton.

It is, however, not the coffer but the chest with fixed top and a set of drawers set in the front that now becomes general, and has remained with us to the present day as a necessary adjunct to every bedroom. Here, for example (Fig. 28), is one of the type with three large and two small drawers, which is that which we most usually employ. Its treatment, however, is decidedly more choice than the habitual output of our time. It is veneered in walnut with panels of floral marquetry on its top, sides, and front. Such marquetry was already prevalent in Holland when Charles II. was there as an exile, and it came to England after his Restoration in 1660, although most of the pieces of it that have survived, like this chest of drawers, do not date from much earlier than 1685.

As with the scrutoire, so with the chest of drawers; when more room was wanted it was given a second storey and you get the tall-boy, of which you will find various examples in several of the rooms in this exhibition. Very often the upper part was just a repetition of the drawer part below;

but there was also the type with doors, either enclosing shelves and making what we call a wardrobe, or covering nests of drawers in cabinet style. The example I show you (Fig. 27) is of walnut enriched with the later kind of inlay called seaweed marquetry, and it dates from about 1710. The upper part resembles what must certainly be classed as a cabinet enriched with arabesque marquetry of the William III. period, and no doubt part of the furnishings obtained before the end of his reign by the first Duke of Devonshire, for Chatsworth, where it still stands (Fig. 29).

Cabinets, so rare under James I., became popular and numerous in England under Charles II., some being imported from Italy, but many from the East. East India Companies had been formed in England, Holland, France, and Portugal at various times during the seventeenth century, and all were flourishing and making large importations during the latter part of the century. Most of these importations came from China and Japan, but being brought over by the East India merchants, they were classed generically as Indian goods. But although we often read of Indian cabinets and Indian screens, the lacquering, of which most of them were examples, soon received the name of japanning. With regard to the importation of such lacquered cabinets, the Portuguese were evidently beforehand with the English, for John Evelyn tells us that the "Indian cabinets" that Catherine of Braganza brought over with her in 1662, when she came to wed Charles II., were such "as had not yet been seen." They were, however, soon seen in most well-furnished English houses, generally set on richly carved and gilt English-made stands, of which this example (Fig. 30) is one of several introduced into Ham House by the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale. The classic love for an entablature or a pediment made the box shape of these cabinets appear unfinished, and so there was often added a cresting, richly carved and gilt like the stand. The art of lacquering was soon taken up at home. Books were written on the subject, and not only was there a large professional output of it, but ladies took it up as a polite amateur art. English lacquer, however, never equalled the Oriental either in its composition or in its execution.

Such are a few examples of furniture to put things in and to put things on that prevailed under the late Stuarts. As regards furniture to sit on, we find that, in the matter of chairs, rapid strides were made after the Restoration towards portability, multiplication, elegance, and comfort. Walnut became the prevalent wood, used with no unnecessary solidity, but skilfully framed together with apt stretchers. At first—that is, even rather before 1660—there was no enrichment except spiral or other turning; the back was generally low and square, and both it and the seat were no longer left of the hard wood, as we saw was usual in the earlier period, but were



FIG. 28.—CHEST OF DRAWERS IN FLORAL
MARQUETRY, *c.* 1690.

From the Rev. Wilfred Brocklebank.



FIG. 29.—WALNUT CABINET WITH SEAWEED
MARQUETRY, *c.* 1695.

From Chatsworth, Derbyshire



FIG. 33.—WALNUT SLEEPING CHAIR, *c.* 1679.

(The upholstery is original.)

From Ham House, Surrey.

upholstered. Soon after the Restoration, however, caning very generally replaced both wood and upholstery, the back was made high and carving became fashionable. Turning, however, was retained for the back uprights and the legs, as also for the stretchers, except the front one, which, like the back cresting, was richly carved. Here we have a transition example (Fig. 31). It is a love-seat rather than a chair, but it is typical of the latter. Legs, stretchers, and uprights are spirally treated, but there is an enriched rail just below the seat, whilst the cane panel of the back is framed with carving, the central *motif* being the amorini and crown that was so largely adopted after the return of the Stuarts. As time went on, greater finish and more carving was introduced; the front stretcher became a very elaborate affair and "C" scrolls began to replace the straight twisted legs. Thus, whereas the example we have just seen will date from about 1665, we are apt to get, some fifteen years later, almost over-elaborated examples such as Figure 32. Here the turning is confined to the back legs and uprights. The front legs are formed of amorini standing on "C" scrolls, and amorini again appear on the great front stretcher and on the cresting of the back, where we find the cane-work panel assuming an over-involved shape, owing to the convolutions of the acanthus foliage carving. Although such light chairs were cane seated and backed, upholstery was usual for ampler and more comfortable chairs. These were often large, well stuffed, with richly carved frames and sumptuous upholstery. In days when rooms were draughty the shelter of side wings was much esteemed, and we get the form now generally known as the grandfather chair. Of such there are no more arresting examples than a pair at Ham House, known as the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale's sleeping chairs (Fig. 33). They will date from about the time of the 1679 inventory, and the character of the frame is very much like that of the last example. But the seat is well cushioned and the back has large protective wings. By means of a ratchet, seen on the right-hand side of the illustration, the back and wings let down so that a more or less reclining posture can be assumed by the occupant. Not the least remarkable feature of these chairs is that they still retain the ancient damask covering and silk fringe.

Despite the multiplication of the chair, now made not singly but in sets, stools remained in use, especially as items in the ceremonious furnishing of palaces and great houses. Thus, when the Duke of Tuscany, already mentioned, dined at Wilton and Althorp, in 1669, one chair only at either place was provided, the rest of the company being seated on stools, just as we found had been the general custom at Ingatestone under Elizabeth. Such was especially the case in royal palaces, alike in audience, in presence, and in bed-chamber. There were armchairs and footstools for King and Queen, but, for the rest, stools and benches which, however, were now upholstered.

At Hampton Court there is a set of which Figure 34 shows one of the stools. Here we have the full development of the scrolled leg, such as, for tables and cabinet stands, we have seen in the Ham and Chatsworth examples, strengthened near the base with turned stretchers but higher up by the broad variety carved with amorini and crown. It, therefore, dates from the closing years of Charles II.'s reign, whereas another set, of which Figure 35 is an example of the long stools or benches, will belong to William III.'s furnishing of the same palace. Here we see the renewal of the straight leg, but in a different form, no longer plain turning but of baluster shape, a treatment that developed into the elaborate pilaster legs already described in the case of Lord Coningsby's gilt side-table. The stretchers that went with this form of leg were of serpentine form, as we find in the Hampton Court Palace set and also in a settee (Fig. 36) again among Lord Coningsby's furniture at his Herefordshire seat, of which the name also was Hampton Court. It is formed as a double armchair, whereas the usual couch of the period, called a day-bed, began by being shaped as a long stool fitted with a back at one end. From that and from the settee were gradually evolved the various forms of sofa fairly prevalent in the eighteenth century, although not in universal use as they are to-day. Towards the end of William III.'s reign a different form of leg began to be introduced, the straight leg once more gave way to a curve, no longer, however, a mere scroll, but derived from an animal form—that is, the leg of the goat, of which the hoof at first generally formed the foot, and the whole form received the name of cabriole, which means a goat's leap. Chairs of this kind began in William III.'s reign, and are to be found at Hampton Court; but the one illustrated (Fig. 37) was in the Donaldson Collection. Caning has given way to upholstery for the seat and has disappeared from the back, which now has a broad wooden slat in its centre. The curve of the leg influences the back, which is also slightly curved not merely for æsthetic affect, but for comfort, fitting in, as it does, with the shape of the human back. The straight, clean line of the cabriole leg gives no particular point for the insertion of a stretcher, so that it comes from it somewhat awkwardly. But as elegance and learnedness of design were now becoming more and more established, and with it the joiner and cabinet-maker were developing greater skill in construction, the stretcher disappears, the absence of such being one of the marked characteristics of the cabriole period which was prevalent for the whole of the first half of the eighteenth century. A beautiful set of walnut chairs, with the Skipwith arms impaling those of Dashwood inlaid in the centre of the back slat, was recently at Honington Hall, in Warwickshire (Fig. 38). It shows a growing feeling against the rather rich but clumsy carving of Charles II.'s reign and the conviction that,



FIG. 34.—WALNUT STOOL, UPHOLSTERED IN CUT
VELVET, c. 1685.

From Hampton Court Palace.



FIG. 35.—WALNUT LONG STOOL OR BENCH, c. 1695.

From Hampton Court Palace.



FIG. 36.—WALNUT SETTEE, *c.* 1690.

(The needlework upholstery is original.)

Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.

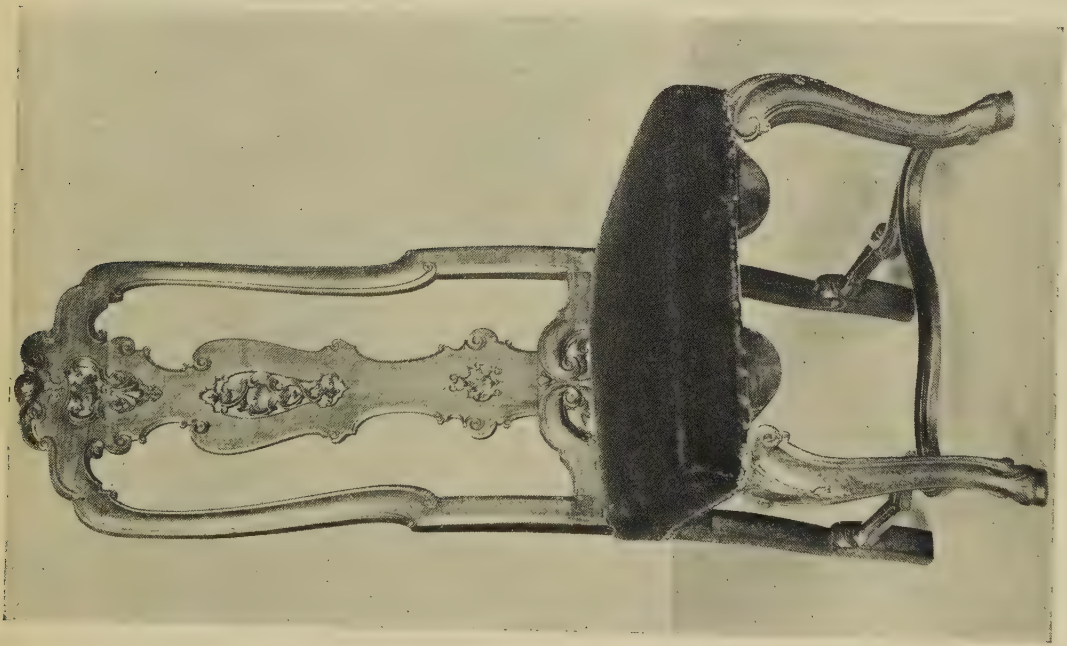


FIG. 37.—WALNUT CABRIOLE LEG CHAIR, *c.* 1700.
Formerly in the Donaldson Collection.

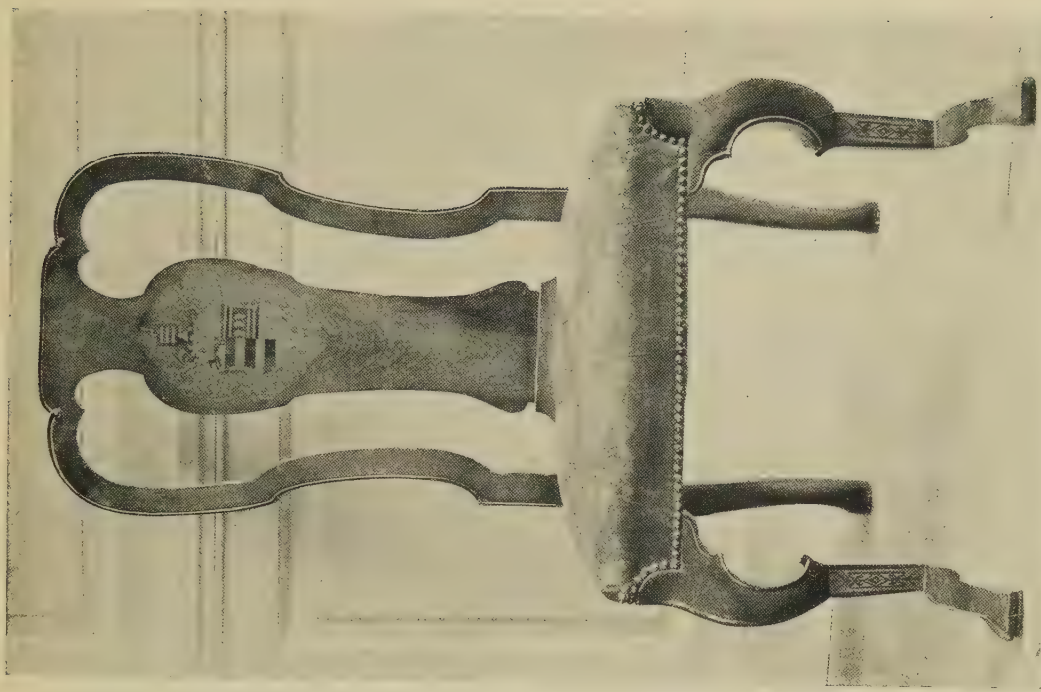


FIG. 38.—CABRIOLE LEG CHAIR, *c.* 1700.
(The arms are those of Skipwith impaling Dashwood.)
Formerly at Honington Hall, Warwickshire.



FIG. 39.—GILT BED AND FURNITURE, UPHOLSTERED IN CRIMSON VELVET, c. 1685.

Formerly at Glemham Hall, Suffolk.

where enrichment is used, it must exhibit finished and masterly craftsmanship. The legs are of the kind called the broken cabriole, and still end with an approximation of the goat hoof. Soon, however, that gives way to the plain club foot or to the more elaborate lion paw or eagle claw holding a ball, and you get into the full type of furniture, mostly of mahogany (which began to displace walnut under Queen Anne), that we have been accustomed roughly to label as Chippendale, although Thomas Chippendale was no more than one of many of the highly capable cabinet-makers of Georgian days.

Passing from furniture to sit on to furniture to lie upon, we find that, with the Restoration, the habit of showing, and, therefore, of highly ornamenting the woodwork of posts, back, and tester was once more abandoned, and beds, increasing in size and height, became fields for the display of vast quantities of the finest textiles, the most sumptuous fringes, and most expensive plumage. Survivals of late seventeenth-century times are not numerous, since the materials were perishable and the type became unfashionable; but we can learn all about them by a study of the Royal Wardrobe Accounts—that is to say, the accounts that dealt with the furnishing of the Royal Palaces—which describe every item. Thus, in 1667, we find mention of “Our Dearest Consort’s bed” at Whitehall. The account seems to include the textiles not only for the bed, but for the wall and window hangings, for there were used in all 550 yards of sky-coloured Genoa damask, valued at £770, and if you multiply that by seven or eight to reach present-day values, you will see that the silken fabric alone represents a value of several thousand pounds. That, however, was only the beginning, for the cost of fringes and other trimmings was £884, and that of the plumes, £89, thus involving an expenditure of about £1,800 of the money of that day. Rather less costly—that is, about £1,500—was paid by the King for “My Own bed at Whitehall.” Right through his reign and during that of James II. we get repeated instances of such magnificent beds being supplied for the various palaces, certainly at no less and sometimes at increased cost. No fine example now exists in any Royal Palace, but I am inclined to think that one or two of these Royal Late-Stuart beds are still to be found in private houses. At the death of a Sovereign, the Lord Chamberlain in office had rights of perquisites that seem to have included the removal of quite large quantities of the finest furniture from the palaces. William III.’s Lord Chamberlain was Charles, fifth Earl of Dorset and owner of Knole. Thus, at Knole we find a bed hung with cloth of gold and lined with coral taffeta that tradition tells us was provided by the third Earl for the reception of James I. I am quite sure that this is an erroneous attribution, as the character of the bed and, especially, of its splendid fringes, is not at all that of James I.’s time, but precisely what

we should expect of the year 1667 when the Whitehall beds were made, and to which I certainly assign a bed still at Holyrood, of exactly the same detail, although of far less expensive get-up than the one at Knole. Also at Knole we get a grander bed, accompanied by a massive set of gilt furniture, which has not only the royal crown and supporters, but the cipher of James II. on it, and will, therefore, date from between 1685 and 1688, and no doubt came to Knole through the same Lord Chamberlain.

Courtiers followed the royal example in the sumptuousness of their State bed-chamber appointments, and were closely followed even by rich merchants. Thus Sir Dudley North, having made a large fortune as a Levant merchant, took a great house in the City of London where he not only carried on business, but dwelt grandly and was prepared to entertain royalty. The State bed and furniture that he had made for the purpose afterwards went to his son's country seat of Glemham, in Suffolk, and here is a picture of it and its accompanying chairs (Fig. 39) as they were to be seen until recently at Glemham. It is hung in crimson velvet, and, like the royal beds, the thick masses of silk fringe are a distinguishing feature. The posts have elaborately carved and gilt feet of amorini amid scroll-work, and they end at the top with the usual and then very expensive plumes of ostrich and egret feathers. The armchairs are typical of the later years of Charles II., and answer to the description of such already given.

Under William III. there was a lessening of the amount of fringes, but a great increase in the elaboration of backs and testers, these being intricately carved in white wood, over which was pasted damask or velvet outlined with *galons* and fringes. A noteworthy example was among the Coningsby furniture in Herefordshire (Fig. 40). Crimson, and less often yellow, were the usual colours of the damasks used for such beds, but we have seen that the Queen's Whitehall bed was blue, and of that rarely used colour is the Coningsby bed, which was so high—14 feet, if I remember right—that, when I was there a few years ago, I found it had been taken to pieces and stored. Fortunately, when, at my special desire, it was again set up (the brew-house seemed the only place lofty enough for this purpose), it was found to be in its entirety and in admirable condition. It is typical of the designing of Daniel Marot, the French architect and furniture designer, who, as a Huguenot, had sought refuge in Holland and designed for William III. both there and in England. It is thus described in the *Dictionary of Furniture*:

“The damask hangings are in admirable preservation, and the disposition of their folds is typical of Marot. The coved cornice of the tester is surmounted by a cresting of delicately fretted and foliated scrollwork. In the ceiling large



FIG. 40.—BED IN BLUE DAMASK, STYLE OF DANIEL MAROT, c. 1695.

Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.



FIG. 41.—KNIFE BOXES AND SPIRIT CASE.

From Erddig Park, Denbighshire.



FIG. 42.—CELLARET, c. 1740.

From Mr. Percival Griffiths.



FIG. 43.—WINE WAITER, c. 1750.

From Mr. Percival Griffiths.

fretted ornaments occupy the area of the coving that supports a flat octagon. The head-board is formed of a cartouche resting on a broad base, and below swags of drapery clothe the elaborate whorling. This ornament is not mere folds of damask but carved wood on to which the damask is pasted, the whole being outlined with tufted fringe. The folds and knots above the head-board, however, and those composing the valances, are formed of damask alone, very heavily fringed."

As the eighteenth century progressed the fashion of once more showing woodwork was reintroduced, and we get the elegant and beautifully carved bedposts of Chippendale and Sheraton, while certain beds specially designed by Robert Adam, such as the one at Osterley, although different in style, equal in sumptuousness those that we find described in the Wardrobe Accounts of the late Stuarts. Of course, there were other and lighter forms of beds, just as there was a development in the various forms and attributions of every other class of furniture, the development being by no means limited to the three main classes into which we divided furniture, but including a host of *miscellanea*, which we can group under the heads of utensils and of ornaments. Under the former the beautiful chimney furniture of the Lauderdale's at Ham House shows you the finish of the craftsmanship that included every detail of the furnishing of a great house at that time. Fire-baskets, fire-irons, bellows, and fire-screens are of beautifully formed wrought iron, enriched or overlaid with devices in the exquisitely embossed silver-work of the time. In days when eating and drinking were of extreme importance and much time was spent in the dining-room, the various auxiliaries to service there received great attention and quite a collection of such, all belonging to what we have called the cabriole period, has been brought together by Mr. Percival Griffiths, who has specially attended to this period. Here, for instance, is a cellarette, or wine-cooler, of mahogany, octagonal in shape (Fig. 42), the beautifully figured mahogany being banded with inlay, whilst the base, showing the curves of the cabriole period, is carved. The interior is lead-lined with divisions for nine bottles. It dates from about 1740, and is a little earlier than a wine waiter (Fig. 43) shaped like a rectangular stool of the cabriole period, with castors to make it run along easily. The top, instead of being a seat, has a mahogany tray divided into half a dozen sections for bottles and decanters, with a hand-grip in the centre. In days when offices were far from dining-rooms, the transit and heating of plates was a consideration, and Mr. Griffiths' collection includes plate pails of mahogany, fretted in Chippendale's Chinese and Gothic manner, with metal handle at the top and one of the eight sections of the side omitted to enable the plates being lifted out one by one. Each pail would hold three dozen or so, and, being brought from the offices, would be placed before the fire to keep the plates hot. On the sideboards were to be

found mahogany cases with brass or silver mounts to hold sets of knives and forks, and *en suite* with them, little cellarettes or spirit bottle holders. An exceptionally beautiful set of such is to be found at Erddig Park, near Wrexham (Fig. 41).

For lighting purposes candles were the chief illuminant, and were set in various ways. Candelabra were placed on stands some 5 feet high, generally of mahogany, but, for sumptuous rooms, of white wood elaborately carved and gilt, like various sets at Hampton Court, one of which, of William III.'s time, is illustrated (Fig. 44), whilst others have the cipher of George II. and will date from about 1740. On the walls were sconces of silver, brass, wood gilt, crystal, and other materials, all of which substances also were used for chandeliers suspended from the centre of the ceilings. One of the finest I know of these (Fig. 45) is in the Saloon at Brocket Hall, in Hertfordshire, a house completed by the architect, James Payne, for the second Lord Melbourne, after 1765. Candelabras for use on stands or tables were again of many kinds and forms. Very beautiful ones were produced by Matthew Bolton, of Birmingham, who supplied his ormolu objects, such as clocks, perfume-burners, and chandeliers to George III. His ormolu was mounted on various marbles, such as alabaster and Blue John, and a very beautiful set of four candelabra, taking the form of Blue John vases with ormolu branches, is at Saltram, in Devonshire (Fig. 46), where, as we shall soon see, several of the rooms were decorated and furnished by Robert Adam.

Among the ornamental enrichments of rooms under the late Stuarts and Hanoverians, nothing was more favoured than mirrors. The customary place for setting them was between windows, where pictures could be little seen, but where mirrors added to the light and brightness of the room. The craft had been fully developed in Venice, and we find many very fine imported Italian examples. But before the close of the seventeenth century the Vauxhall factory became very active, the constant endeavour being to enlarge the size of the plates. At first these were somewhat small, and to get a proper decorative effect several of them had to be set together and aptly framed. The framing itself was often largely of glass, as in these two examples (Fig. 47), both of which have as their cresting the baron's coronet of Lord Coningsby. The one on the left is composed of three principal plates, with strips of moulded glass covering the joints of the bevelled edges and with glass of various forms and mouldings forming the frame. To the right is a composition similar in general character, but the framing is more elaborate, being composed not only of glass but of wood, carved and gilt. In other cases marquetry and lacquer were used for frames under the Late Stuarts, but more and more did it become the habit of using enriched and gilt wood for the framing. Increased skill gradually produced plates of such



FIG. 44.—GILT CANDLE STAND, *c.* 1700.
From Hampton Court Palace.



FIG. 45.—GLASS CHANDELIER, *c.* 1770.
From Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire.



FIG. 46.—CANDELABRA IN ORMOLU AND BLUE
JOHN, *c.* 1770, PROBABLY BY MATTHEW
BOULTON.
From Saltram, Devonshire.

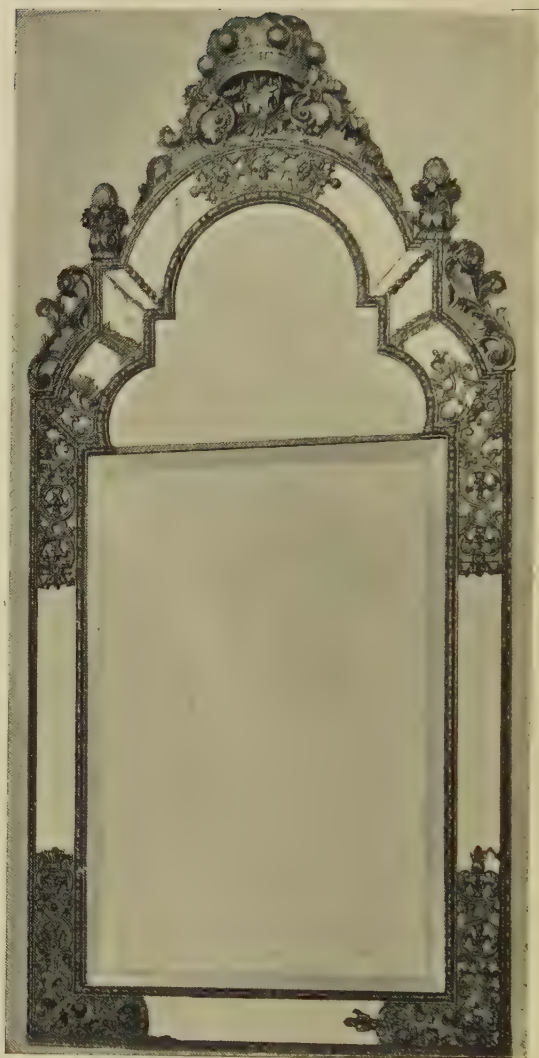
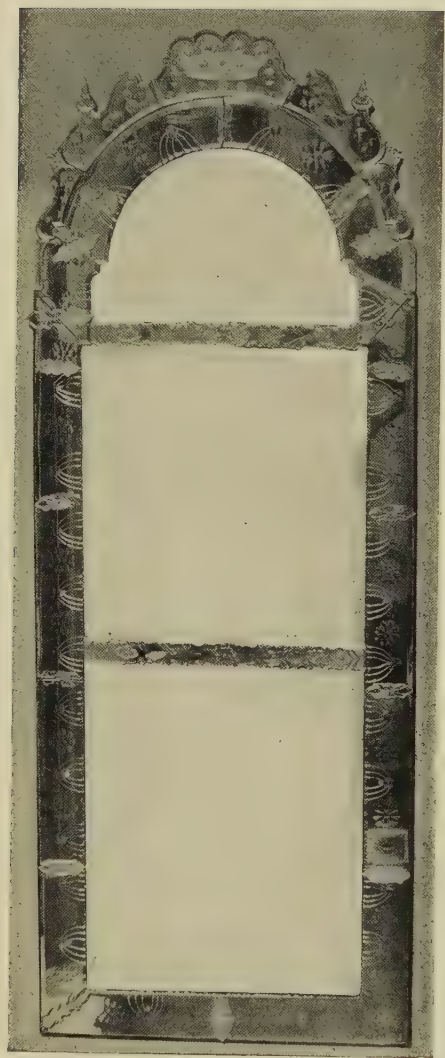


FIG. 47.—MIRRORS, FRAMED IN GLASS AND CARVED WOOD, *c.* 1700.

Formerly at Hampton Court, Herefordshire.



FIG. 48.—GILT MIRRORS AND SIDE-TABLES BY WILLIAM KENT, *c.* 1730.

From Houghton Hall, Norfolk.



FIG. 49.—THE DINING-ROOM AT SALTRAM, DECORATED AND FURNISHED BY ROBERT ADAM, c. 1768.

size that a single one was sufficient, even where enormous mirrors were needed for vast saloons, such as that at Houghton, for which we have seen William Kent designing a huge side-table in about 1730. Two somewhat lesser but equally elaborate ones, designed by him for between windows, are seen in Figure 48, and behind them rise great mirrors framed with equal splendour and the same *motifs* as the tables below.

That takes us as far in the history of our furniture as time allows to-day. We can, therefore, do no more than glance at the change of taste that Robert Adam was introducing when George III. became King, in 1760. Like those before him, he designed in the classic taste, but his characteristics were extreme elegance and refinement. He also aimed at completeness of composition—that is, at the designing, not only of the decorations of a room, but of every piece of furniture and of every adjunct that that room needed. Reaching England from Italy at the end of 1758 he was soon seen to be a master-mind, inventive within the bounds of the adopted style, quick and able as a draughtsman, capable in business matters—as we should expect from a Scotsman—and well assisted by his brother James. They did not hide their light under a bushel, but assure us that “we have not trod the path of others nor derived aid from their labours,” but have “brought about . . . a kind of Revolution” in architecture. They claim to have “seized the beautiful spirit of antiquity” and to have introduced new “delicacy of moulding and enrichment.” Robert at once became the vogue, several of his wealthy clients gave him opportunities for the full exercise of his genius, and we still find the Adam manner carried out and maintained in its entirety in rooms that he did at Syon, for the Duke of Northumberland; at Osterley, for the rich banker, Joseph Child; and at Saltram, for Lord Morley. It is this completeness that characterises the period, and so we appreciate it best, not from single pieces of furniture, but from a representation of an entire room. The suite of rooms that occupies the principal floor at Syon on the east, south, and west sides consisting of hall, ante-room, dining-room, drawing-room, and gallery is as he left it. Every room has specially designed furniture—chairs and sofas, stools and tables, mirrors and carpets—of the most finished design and execution; although, perhaps, the triumph of the architect’s invention materialised by the craftsman’s hand is best seen in the decoration of the drawing-room, where the statuary marble of the chimney-piece is used as a background for astonishingly fine ormolu ornament, which in design and motif consorts with the exquisite gilt enrichment of doors, door-cases, and shutters.

The same perfection we again find in the principal rooms at Osterley, especially those on the south-east side dating from about 1775 and being the final and culminating point of the architect’s treatment of this house. The

Tapestry Room is the acme of consummate designing in Adam's style, carried out, in every particular of decoration and of finish, with masterly technique. If rather less elaborate, the dining-room and saloon at Saltram are no less admirable and complete as examples of Robert Adam's work. Here, for instance (Fig. 49), is the dining-room. Look at the close relation in decorative manner between the scheme of picture-framing on the walls and the construction, enrichment, and colouring of the sideboard—made to fit the recess—and its accompanying wine-coolers, shaped as vases standing on plinths. Note also the concord between ceiling and carpet, the latter having been woven at Moorfields from a design made by Robert Adam in keeping with the main lines of his ceiling. So also in the saloon (*Frontispiece*) there is relationship between ceiling and carpet. Except for the *Louis-Quinze* table in the middle, the furniture is still what was arranged for it by Adam—side-tables and mirrors between windows, chairs, and sofas not unlike the cognate French *Louis-Seize* style, but with an English and personal touch. Great care is observable in the design and execution of the basket grate and fender to harmonise with the fine chimney-piece, and in the corners of the room you see gilt stands specially made to support Matthew Bolton's candelabras already alluded to.

In two lectures—I trust of not too great a length—I have endeavoured to give you a rapid survey of the characteristics of English furniture, from the rough oak of late medieval times to the exquisite but rather chilling reserve and perfection of the last phase of classic in Robert Adam's time. After that we reach a period of decline rather than of advance, and are confronted to-day with an apparent inability to have a style of our own. Under these conditions I would venture to put before you four points. First of all, I would ask you to preserve, appreciate, and study the old. Secondly, to avoid promiscuous purchase of what falsely passes for old, otherwise you will be supporting the manufacture of fakes, which are an unmitigated evil. Thirdly, to accept honest and acknowledged reproductions if you are set on exact former models and cannot have really truthful old pieces. Fourthly, remember that your furniture should represent your present-day needs and tastes and cannot be quite wholesome and ring true unless it is designed on purpose, although on the basis of tradition. We shall not have a living art in furniture—and it is a living art in furniture that we ought to aim at—until we adopt that attitude.



S0-ECY-462

